

# **Brownfields Supplemental Assistance**

## ***Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, MA***

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. The MRPC encompasses 22 communities with a total population of 223,865 in north-central Massachusetts. High concentrations of manufacturing industries in some cities as well as vast expanses of undeveloped towns characterize the MRPC.

Wood, paper, and textile industries in the region have been in decline since the early 1980s, creating a patchwork of brownfields across the region. Today, numerous abandoned and underused red-brick mills sit along rivers and in central business districts. The impact of brownfields has been greatest on the low- and moderate-income and minority residents who live in the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the problem sites. Since 1989, unemployment rates in the region have been consistently higher than state and national levels.

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Montachusett Regional  
Planning Commission,  
Massachusetts*

**Date of Announcement:**  
March 2000

**Amount:** \$150,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets at least six priority brownfields for assessment, including at least one brownfield that is qualified for greenspace purposes.

#### Contacts:

Montachusett Regional  
Planning Commission  
(978) 348-0646

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 1  
(617) 918-1209

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/bmfil/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

## OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The Montachusett Region Brownfield Reuse Initiative (MRBRI), created through the initial Pilot, was established to develop and implement a reuse plan for high-priority brownfields. The overall MRBRI combines the region's comprehensive economic development strategy to reuse brownfields with a developing regional policy to mitigate sprawl into the region's rural fabric. With the supplemental assistance, the MRPC will expand on the theme of returning sites to active industrial and commercial reuse to include developing affordable housing and creating more greenspace.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Update the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection database of brownfields in the Montachusett region, continuing use of the MRPC's geographic information system (GIS) central database;
- Select priority brownfields for further investigation;
- Conduct Phase I environmental assessments on at least five non-greenspace brownfields;
- Conduct Phase II environmental assessments at two of these brownfields;
- Conduct Phase II environmental assessments on at least one brownfield qualified for greenspace purposes; and
- Conduct stakeholder involvement related to these activities.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*